

The invention provides an amusement machine (1) with a playfield (2) divided into four quadrants and includes a coin projection device (3) for projecting articles, such as coins or tokens, onto the playfield (2), a position encoder to detect the articles introduced onto the playfield, and means for clearing articles from the playfield.

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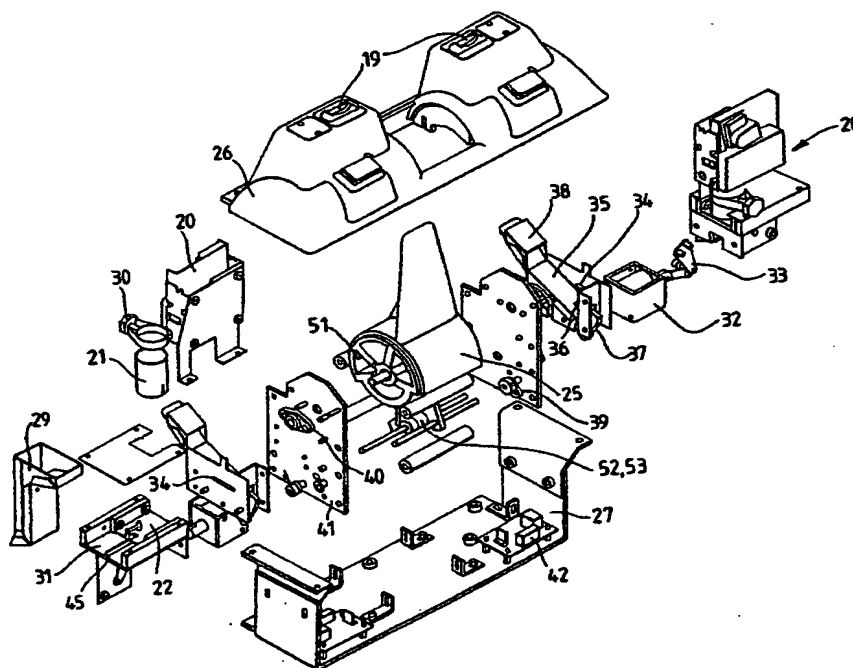
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KE, LS, MW, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZW), Eurasian patent  
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(AT, BE, CH, CY, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU,  
MC, NL, PT, SE), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM,  
GA, GN, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

[Continued on next page]

(54) Title: AN AMUSEMENT MACHINE



(57) Abstract: The invention provides an amusement machine (1) with a playfield (2) divided into four quadrants and includes a coin projection device (3) for projecting articles, such as coins or tokens, onto the playfield (2), a position encoder to detect the articles introduced onto the playfield, and means for clearing articles from the playfield.

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**Published:**

— *With international search report.*

*For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.*

**(88) Date of publication of the international search report:**

31 May 2001

# INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Int. Application No

PCT/GB 00/01042

**A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER**  
IPC 7 G07F17/38

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

**B. FIELDS SEARCHED**

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

IPC 7 G07F G07D A63F

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)

EP0-Internal

**C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT**

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	FR 802 083 A (BENKÖ ET AL.) 26 August 1936 (1936-08-26)	12-14
Y	page 2, line 16 - line 23  page 3, line 53 -page 4, line 61; figures	1,3-5, 7-11
Y	US 4 744 566 A (MALAVAZOS ET AL.) 17 May 1988 (1988-05-17) column 4, line 23 - line 51 column 5, line 27 - line 37; figures 1,7	1,3-5, 7-11
Y	GB 620 477 A (AMAC) 21 April 1949 (1949-04-21)	1,3-5, 8-10
A	page 4, line 101 -page 5, line 8 page 5, line 52 - line 119 page 6, line 69 - line 75; figures  -/--	12

☒ Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C.

☒ Patent family members are listed in annex.

\* Special categories of cited documents :

- \*A\* document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance
- \*E\* earlier document but published on or after the international filing date
- \*L\* document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)
- \*O\* document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means
- \*P\* document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

- \*T\* later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention
- \*X\* document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone
- \*Y\* document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art.
- \*G\* document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

6 September 2000

Date of mailing of the international search report

14. 09. 2000

Name and mailing address of the ISA

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NL - 2280 HV Rijswijk  
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Authorized officer

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## INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Int. Application No.

PCT/GB 00/01042

## C.(Continuation) DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category °	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
Y A	EP 0 250 226 A (CROMPTON MACHINE COMPANY) 23 December 1987 (1987-12-23) column 2, line 13 - line 34	1,3-5, 8-10 2,7, 11-15
A	WO 98 04326 A (CROMPTONS LEISURE MACHINES) 5 February 1998 (1998-02-05) page 5 -page 6, line 5 page 8, line 1 - line 7; figures 1,2	1,2,8,10
A	GB 2 252 735 A (WELLS) 19 August 1992 (1992-08-19) abstract; figures	16-20,32
X	US 5 785 594 A (SEIBERT ET AL.) 28 July 1998 (1998-07-28) column 4, line 40 - line 45 column 5, line 42 - line 65 column 6, line 29 - line 51 column 9, line 4 - line 58; figures	21-32

FURTHER INFORMATION CONTINUED FROM PCT/ISA/ 210

This International Searching Authority found multiple (groups of) inventions in this international application, as follows:

1. Claims: 1-15

Coin projection means and means dispensing coins to a firing path.

1.1. Claims: 1-11

Coin projection means

1.2. Claims: 12-15

Means dispensing coins to a firing path.

2. Claims: 16-20,32

Gaming surface with sweeper arm.

3. Claims: 21-32

Gaming surface with sensors and position encoder.

Please note that all inventions mentioned under item 1, although not necessarily linked by a common inventive concept, could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee.

# INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

International Application No

PCT/GB 00/01042

Patent document cited in search report		Publication date	Patent family member(s)	Publication date
FR 802083	A	26-08-1936	NONE	
US 4744566	A	17-05-1988	GB 2218644 A,B	22-11-1989
GB 620477	A		NONE	
EP 250226	A	23-12-1987	GB 2192802 A,B US 4759551 A	27-01-1988 26-07-1988
WO 9804326	A	05-02-1998	AU 717954 B AU 3928297 A EP 0959970 A	06-04-2000 20-02-1998 01-12-1999
GB 2252735	A	19-08-1992	NONE	
US 5785594	A	28-07-1998	NONE	



# INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.  
PCT/GB 00/01042

## Box I Observations where certain claims were found unsearchable (Continuation of item 1 of first sheet)

This International Search Report has not been established in respect of certain claims under Article 17(2)(a) for the following reasons:

1. ☐ Claims Nos.:  
because they relate to subject matter not required to be searched by this Authority, namely:
2. ☐ Claims Nos.:  
because they relate to parts of the International Application that do not comply with the prescribed requirements to such an extent that no meaningful International Search can be carried out, specifically:
3. ☐ Claims Nos.:  
because they are dependent claims and are not drafted in accordance with the second and third sentences of Rule 6.4(a).

## Box II Observations where unity of invention is lacking (Continuation of item 2 of first sheet)

This International Searching Authority found multiple inventions in this international application, as follows:

see additional sheet

1. ☒ As all required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this International Search Report covers all searchable claims.
2. ☐ As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee, this Authority did not invite payment of any additional fee.
3. ☐ As only some of the required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this International Search Report covers only those claims for which fees were paid, specifically claims Nos.:
4. ☐ No required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant. Consequently, this International Search Report is restricted to the invention first mentioned in the claims; it is covered by claims Nos.:

### Remark on Protest

- ☐ The additional search fees were accompanied by the applicant's protest.
- ☒ No protest accompanied the payment of additional search fees.

## PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

PCT

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## INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

(PCT Article 36 and Rule 70)

Applicant's or agent's file reference G14807WO	<b>FOR FURTHER ACTION</b> See Notification of Transmittal of International Preliminary Examination Report (Form PCT/IPEA/416)	
International application No. PCT/GB00/01042	International filing date (day/month/year) 21/03/2000	Priority date (day/month/year) 22/03/1999
International Patent Classification (IPC) or national classification and IPC G07F17/38		
Applicant CROMPTONS LEISURE MACHINES LIMITED et al.		

1. This international preliminary examination report has been prepared by this International Preliminary Examining Authority and is transmitted to the applicant according to Article 36.



2. This REPORT consists of a total of 8 sheets, including this cover sheet.

- ☐ This report is also accompanied by ANNEXES, i.e. sheets of the description, claims and/or drawings which have been amended and are the basis for this report and/or sheets containing rectifications made before this Authority (see Rule 70.16 and Section 607 of the Administrative Instructions under the PCT).

These annexes consist of a total of sheets.

3. This report contains indications relating to the following items:

- I ☒ Basis of the report
- II ☐ Priority
- III ☐ Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability
- IV ☒ Lack of unity of invention
- V ☒ Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
- VI ☐ Certain documents cited
- VII ☒ Certain defects in the international application
- VIII ☒ Certain observations on the international application

Date of submission of the demand  22/09/2000	Date of completion of this report  04.09.2001
Name and mailing address of the international preliminary examining authority:   European Patent Office - P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2 NL-2280 HV Rijswijk - Pays Bas Tel. +31 70 340 - 2040 Tx: 31 651 epo nl Fax: +31 70 340 - 3016	Authorized officer  Neville, D  Telephone No. +31 70 340 2892  

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY  
EXAMINATION REPORT**

International application No. PCT/GB00/01042

**I. Basis of the report**

1. With regard to the **elements** of the international application (*Replacement sheets which have been furnished to the receiving Office in response to an invitation under Article 14 are referred to in this report as "originally filed" and are not annexed to this report since they do not contain amendments (Rules 70.16 and 70.17)*):

**Description, pages:**

1-19 as originally filed

**Claims, No.:**

1-33 as originally filed

**Drawings, sheets:**

1/7-7/7 as originally filed

2. With regard to the **language**, all the elements marked above were available or furnished to this Authority in the language in which the international application was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.

These elements were available or furnished to this Authority in the following language: , which is:

- ☐ the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of the international search (under Rule 23.1(b)).
- ☐ the language of publication of the international application (under Rule 48.3(b)).
- ☐ the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international preliminary examination (under Rule 55.2 and/or 55.3).

3. With regard to any **nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence** disclosed in the international application, the international preliminary examination was carried out on the basis of the sequence listing:

- ☐ contained in the international application in written form.
- ☐ filed together with the international application in computer readable form.
- ☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in written form.
- ☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in computer readable form.
- ☐ The statement that the subsequently furnished written sequence listing does not go beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed has been furnished.
- ☐ The statement that the information recorded in computer readable form is identical to the written sequence listing has been furnished.

4. The amendments have resulted in the cancellation of:

- ☐ the description, pages:
- ☐ the claims, Nos.:

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY  
EXAMINATION REPORT**

International application No. PCT/GB00/01042

☐ the drawings, sheets:

5. ☐ This report has been established as if (some of) the amendments had not been made, since they have been considered to go beyond the disclosure as filed (Rule 70.2(c)):

*(Any replacement sheet containing such amendments must be referred to under item 1 and annexed to this report.)*

6. Additional observations, if necessary:

**IV. Lack of unity of invention**

1. In response to the invitation to restrict or pay additional fees the applicant has:

- ☐ restricted the claims.  
☒ paid additional fees.  
☐ paid additional fees under protest.  
☐ neither restricted nor paid additional fees.

2. ☐ This Authority found that the requirement of unity of invention is not complied and chose, according to Rule 68.1, not to invite the applicant to restrict or pay additional fees.

3. This Authority considers that the requirement of unity of invention in accordance with Rules 13.1, 13.2 and 13.3 is

- ☐ complied with.  
☐ not complied with for the following reasons:

4. Consequently, the following parts of the international application were the subject of international preliminary examination in establishing this report:

- ☒ all parts.  
☐ the parts relating to claims Nos. .

**V. Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement**

**1. Statement**

Novelty (N)	Yes:	Claims	1-11,13-20,23,26,28-31
	No:	Claims	12,21,22,24,25,27,32
Inventive step (IS)	Yes:	Claims	2,6,15-20,23
	No:	Claims	1,3-5,7-14,21,22,24-32

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY  
EXAMINATION REPORT**

International application No. PCT/GB00/01042

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Industrial applicability (IA)    Yes:    Claims    1-32  
   No:    Claims

2. Citations and explanations  
    **see separate sheet**

**VII. Certain defects in the international application**

The following defects in the form or contents of the international application have been noted:  
**see separate sheet**

**VIII. Certain observations on the international application**

The following observations on the clarity of the claims, description, and drawings or on the question whether the claims are fully supported by the description, are made:  
**see separate sheet**

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY  
EXAMINATION REPORT - SEPARATE SHEET**

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International application No. PCT/GB00/01042

**Re Item V**

Reasoned statement under Rule 66.2(a)(ii) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

1. The applicant's comments, which were concerned with features not in the claims, were considered when drawing up this examination report.
2. Reference is made to the following documents:
  - D1 FR802083
  - D2 US4744566
  - D3 GB620477
  - D4 US5785594
  - D5 GB2252735
3. D1 discloses a coin projection device comprising a coin entry (E), coins passing to a coin stack holder (28), coin ejection means (29-35) being provided for pushing the bottom coin in the stack onto a coin projection runway (u), the device further comprising a firing mechanism (page 2, lines 30-44) for striking the edge of a coin on the runway to drive the coin along the runway thereby to project the coin.

D1, which dates from the 1930s, does not disclose validation of inserted coins. At the time of filing of the present application the validation of coins inserted into amusement machines, especially those offering the possibility of a reward, was a routine option used by the skilled man as a matter of course and which brings well-known advantages. A player cannot insert worthless counterfeit coins and win valid coins. The subject-matter of claim 1 does not therefore involve any inventive step (Art. 33(3) PCT).

D1 further discloses the features of claims 3-5,8,10,11 which even in combination therefore cannot serve as the basis for any inventive step (Art. 33(3) PCT).

The features of claim 7 solve the problem of changing the direction of travel of a projected coin. D2 discloses just such a deflection device for validated coins in an amusement machine (see column 4, lines 27-51 and figure 7). Thus the skilled

man is aware of the use of these same features to solve the same problem and the subject-matter of claim 7 is therefore obvious (Art. 33(3) PCT).

D3 discloses (see page 4, line 126 to page 5, line 8) an amusement machine comprising a multiple coin-launching device analogous to the subject-matter of claim 9, which therefore lacks any inventive step (Art. 33(3) PCT).

The subject-matters of claims 2 and 6 are neither disclosed nor rendered obvious by the prior art documents available although D2 does disclose a validation device which detects coins entered.

4. D1 discloses a coin magazine (28) for a coin projection device, comprising a coin holder (28) for holding a stack of coins and a platform (31) for supporting the coin stack, wherein the platform (31) is slidable between a first position in which the coin stack is supported on the platform (31) and a second position in which the coin stack is supported on a further, lower platform (30), and when the platform (31) passes from the first position to the second position, the coin stack drops to the lower platform (30), and when the platform (31) passes from the second position to the first position the lowest coin in the stack is pushed by the platform (31) onto a coin firing path (u). Therefore the subject-matter of claim 12 is not new (Art. 33(2) PCT).

The subject-matter of claims 13 and 14 is within the scope of the customary practice followed by persons skilled in the art, the advantages of which are readily foreseen, and therefore lacks any inventive step (Art. 33(3) PCT).

The subject-matter of claim 15 is neither disclosed nor rendered obvious by the prior art documents available.

5. The subject-matter of claims 16-20 and 32 insofar as it is dependent on any of claims 16-20 is neither disclosed or rendered obvious by the prior art documents available.
6. D4 discloses an article holding apparatus comprising a surface (60b) defining a target field having an array of target areas (44) at positions on the target field and

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY  
EXAMINATION REPORT - SEPARATE SHEET**

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a position encoder (58;110; see column 6, lines 29-51) having a number of sensors, the target field and the or each sensor being adapted for relative movement to one another so that articles introduced onto the target field can be detected by a sensor (52a,52b), wherein the position encoder maintains a cyclical count and is arranged to determine whether or not an article detected by a sensor is within a target area on the target field with reference to a count value held by a counter (see column 6, lines 52-67). The subject-matter of claim 21 is therefore not new (Art. 33(2) PCT).

If the expression "a number of sensors" in claim 21 is interpreted as meaning "more than one sensor" then the subject-matter of claim 21 lacks any inventive step, being obvious because the advantages of multiple sensors over a single sensor in terms of increased accuracy, sensitivity, resolution and reliability are readily foreseen. The same applies to the subject-matters of claims 30 and 31. (Art. 33(3) PCT).

D4 further discloses the subject-matters of claims 22,24,25,27 and 32 insofar as it is dependent on any of claims 21-31 which are therefore either not new or, even in combination with the subject-matter of other claims, lack any inventive step (Art. 33(2),33(3) PCT).

The subject-matter of claim 26 lacks any inventive step because it represents merely one of several straightforward possibilities from which the skilled person would select, without the exercise of inventive skill, in order to solve the problem of detecting the presence of coins (Art. 33(3) PCT).

The subject-matters of claims 28 and 29 represent, along with that of claim 27, the obvious possibilities open to the skilled person in order to achieve a relative motion between two parts, namely one stationary and one mobile part, or both parts mobile, and cannot therefore serve as the basis of any inventive step (Art. 33(3) PCT).

Although D4 discloses the assignment of a range of positions of a rotary member to take account of the width of a coin receptacle (see column 9, lines 26-29) none of the available prior art seems to disclose or render obvious a correction factor



**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY  
EXAMINATION REPORT - SEPARATE SHEET**

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International application No. PCT/GB00/01042

for position to compensate for variations in speed of motion, as set out in claim 23.

**Re Item VII**

Certain defects in the international application

1. The independent claims are not in two-part form (Rule 6.3(b) PCT) with those features known in combination from document D1, for independent claims 1 and 12, document D5, for independent claim 16, and document D4, for independent claim 21, as the basis for the preambles (Rule 6.3(b)(i) PCT) and with the remaining features being included in the characterising parts (Rule 6.3(b)(ii) PCT). The features of the claims are not provided with reference signs placed in parentheses (Rule 6.2(b) PCT).
2. The relevant background art disclosed in the documents D1, D4 and D5 is not mentioned in the description, nor are these documents identified therein (Rule 5.1(a)(ii) PCT).

**Re Item VIII**

Certain observations on the international application

1. The subject-matter of claims 27-29 is unclear because of the contradiction involved in the sensors or playfield being simultaneously movable and static (Art. 6 PCT).

What is to be juxtaposed to form the subject-matter of the last claim (the second claim to be numbered 32) is unclear (Art. 6 PCT).

## PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

PCT

## NOTIFICATION OF ELECTION

(PCT Rule 61.2)

From the INTERNATIONAL BUREAU

To:

Assistant Commissioner for Patents  
 United States Patent and Trademark  
 Office  
 Box PCT  
 Washington, D.C. 20231  
 ETATS-UNIS D'AMERIQUE

in its capacity as elected Office

<b>Date of mailing (day/month/year)</b> 23 October 2000 (23.10.00)	
<b>International application No.</b> PCT/GB00/01042	<b>Applicant's or agent's file reference</b> PJF/G14807WO
<b>International filing date (day/month/year)</b> 21 March 2000 (21.03.00)	<b>Priority date (day/month/year)</b> 22 March 1999 (22.03.99)
<b>Applicant</b> JUKES, David, Anthony et al	

1. The designated Office is hereby notified of its election made:

☒ in the demand filed with the International Preliminary Examining Authority on:

22 September 2000 (22.09.00)

☐ in a notice effecting later election filed with the International Bureau on:2. The election ☒ was☐ was not

made before the expiration of 19 months from the priority date or, where Rule 32 applies, within the time limit under Rule 32.2(b).

The International Bureau of WIPO 34, chemin des Colombettes 1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland Facsimile No.: (41-22) 740.14.35	Authorized officer Peggy Steunenberg Telephone No.: (41-22) 338.83.38
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## PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

## PCT

## INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

(PCT Article 18 and Rules 43 and 44)

Applicant's or agent's file reference <b>PJF/G14807W0</b>	<b>FOR FURTHER ACTION</b> see Notification of Transmittal of International Search Report (Form PCT/ISA/220) as well as, where applicable, item 5 below.	
International application No. <b>PCT/GB 00/ 01042</b>	International filing date (day/month/year) <b>21/03/2000</b>	(Earliest) Priority Date (day/month/year) <b>22/03/1999</b>
Applicant <b>CROMPTONS LEISURE MACHINES LIMITED et al.</b>		

This International Search Report has been prepared by this International Searching Authority and is transmitted to the applicant according to Article 18. A copy is being transmitted to the International Bureau.

This International Search Report consists of a total of 5 sheets.

☒ It is also accompanied by a copy of each prior art document cited in this report.

## 1. Basis of the report

- a. With regard to the language, the international search was carried out on the basis of the international application in the language in which it was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.

☐ the international search was carried out on the basis of a translation of the international application furnished to this Authority (Rule 23.1(b)).

- b. With regard to any nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence disclosed in the international application, the international search was carried out on the basis of the sequence listing :

☐ contained in the international application in written form.

☐ filed together with the international application in computer readable form.

☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in written form.

☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in computer readable form.

☐ the statement that the subsequently furnished written sequence listing does not go beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed has been furnished.

☐ the statement that the information recorded in computer readable form is identical to the written sequence listing has been furnished

2. ☐ Certain claims were found unsearchable (See Box I).

3. ☒ Unity of invention is lacking (see Box II).

## 4. With regard to the title,

☒ the text is approved as submitted by the applicant.

☐ the text has been established by this Authority to read as follows:

## 5. With regard to the abstract,

☒ the text is approved as submitted by the applicant.

☐ the text has been established, according to Rule 38.2(b), by this Authority as it appears in Box III. The applicant may, within one month from the date of mailing of this international search report, submit comments to this Authority.

## 6. The figure of the drawings to be published with the abstract is Figure No.

☐ as suggested by the applicant.

☐ because the applicant failed to suggest a figure.

☒ because this figure better characterizes the invention.

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☐ None of the figures.